

MEETING NOTES
Accreditation Study Work Group
October 20, 2004

Beginning of Meeting/Logistics

The group began its meeting at approximately 9:10 a.m. The group discussed several logistical issues such as the organization of their materials and binders. It was determined that CTC staff would not mail hard copies of materials for the members of the group from this point forward and that all materials would be provided in electronic form only.

Constituent Feedback

The group discussed the feedback received recently related to the survey created after the last meeting. The members discussed the need to continue to collect constituent feedback on this recent set of questions. Several members noted that they had meetings or conferences soon that would provide a good opportunity to continue to collect input on the issues identified by the group. It was determined that the members of the workgroup would continue to collect feedback on this existing survey and that this information could be shared at the next meeting.

The group also discussed the need to alter the format for future surveys. The members discussed the length of the current survey and suggested that once the group has narrowed some of the potential options, that the survey could allow for individuals to quickly indicate their preference for one or more of the options. Co-Facilitator Beverly Young indicated that Mary Sandy, former CTC staff member and now with the CSU Chancellor's Office, had offered to assist CTC staff in developing future surveys.

Unit Accreditation and Program Approval

The work group reviewed the constituent feedback regarding the advantages and disadvantages related to the existing CTC accreditation structure that is based upon a single accreditation decision of the entire unit with program review and issues feeding into that accreditation decision. CTC staff member Cheryl Hickey commented that her read of the constituency feedback, in many respects, echoed what she heard work group members say at the last meeting, that is, that unit accreditation appears to have general support especially because it provides the dean and the administration with the leverage with the institution to make necessary changes. She noted, however, that concern was raised about the level of attention that program issues were given within this structure. She noted that the feedback included comments that described situations in which accreditation teams may hesitate to bring issues forward in a formal manner in the accreditation report about a weak program as it may have a bearing on the accreditation of an institution with primarily very strong programs. Institutions may also be more successful in "hiding" program issues under this structure.

Co-Facilitator Ed Kujawa summarized by noting that the feedback indicates that there needs to be further discussion about what kind of changes could be recommended for program review.

Lynne Cook commented that she believes that the feedback suggests that there needs to be discussion about stipulations and more flexibility for follow up, including the timeline for follow up.

Diane Mayer suggested that it is critically important that the group explain the rationale for why one approach is favored and include in such a rationale how one contributes to on-going program improvement.

Co-Facilitator Beverly Young noted that several comments suggested that unit accreditation allows for the various programs within an institution to come together to work towards common goals, a common mission, and to collaborate more closely, but that there needs to be a way to recognize and address program weaknesses.

Dr. Birch noted that he believed that much of the concern is related to the manner in which the current process and procedures have been implemented and that these can be changed readily. However, he said that the current system assumes that full accreditation means that no follow up is necessary and the group may want to reconsider that.

Beverly Young noted that, under the current system, stipulations are possible but that the group might try and look at a system that allows for the noting of concerns without being a stipulation on the entire unit – perhaps develop a “lesser” program stipulation. This may allow for an institution to have full accreditation and the teams could still raise issues related to particular programs. She noted that regardless, it is still the unit’s responsibility to fix the problem area.

Lynne Cook noted that the group still needed to discuss the role of the reviewers and that the group needed to look at changes in the *Framework* that could enhance what it is currently doing, how, and when.

Ed Kujawa commented that he believed that if an institution has more than one identified weak program, that the unit should be given a stipulation. He noted that this idea of a “lesser” or program stipulation should be reserved for those cases where there are generally good programs with one exception.

Beverly Young responded to Ed Kujawa’s comment by cautioning against using any definitive formula to fit all institutions, especially as sizes of institutions and number of programs offered differ significantly; although she did say she believed that establishing criteria would be necessary. She noted that one of the factors behind the issue currently being discussed is that teams differ and there has been an inconsistent result in how they address these situations. She summarized by saying that she believes that the group should examine “tweener” models that maintain unit accreditation but address program issues in a more highlighted fashion.

Lynne Cook again noted that she believes that the manner in which stipulations have been applied are not as written in the *Framework*. She noted that particularly with what came from BIR and what the COA did related to stipulations needs further study.

Diane Mayer once again reiterated that the group needed to discuss and identify the rationale for the structure instead of moving directly to how to make operational such a structure.

Dr. Birch noted that it appears there is a need to enhance decision-making through the structure.

Ed Kujawa commented that he liked the direction the group was heading and noted that follow-up will be a critical aspect. He noted that he likes the idea of some level of required follow up and that to do it in a procedural way will get at program improvement. He said that 1 year has not always been sufficient and that there is a need for a longer window.

Lynne Cook raised the issue of resources and noted that if there is a need to make a budgetary choice that she would prefer to maintain the focus on programs rather than unit accreditation. However, she clarified that this was only if there was a need to prioritize review due to budget issues.

Iris Riggs asked whether a program was ever shut down immediately because it was considered so bad that it needed immediate action. Larry Birch noted that this has not happened. Lynnee Cook replied that institutions usually withdraw such a program before the visit. Ed Kujawa added that institutions have also shut down a program after the visit and before the one year follow up.

Terry Cannings commented that he would be supportive of the development of a new structure of the type the group has been discussing. He suggested that CTC staff follow up on Diane Mayer's suggestion and develop a draft rationale for the group to consider. He also asked staff to develop some model options that may accomplish what the group has been discussing.

Beverly Young summarized and said that it sounds as if the group is supporting Option 3 on the matrix.

Ellen Curtis-Pierce asked whether there would be cost implications for moving in this direction. Staff commented that at first glance it does not appear as if there would be any increase in cost for the Commission, although additional follow-up required may increase the costs to the institution. Beverly Young noted that follow-up though is integral to the accreditation process.

Claire Palmerino noted that if the Commission considers closing down after appropriate opportunities for follow up, that guidelines need to be as clear as possible. She supported the notion of developing a rationale.

Barbara Merino commented that it should be clear as to the types of evidence that would be needed for a follow up and what would be needed to ensure quality. She noted that the Commission needed to be careful about being too generous.

Larry Birch noted that there is no written criteria for follow up, but that the stipulations have some general criteria. He commented that follow up has taken place in different ways in the past – electronic or in person.

Iris Riggs responded that there should be greater specificity as to what is expected in the follow up and who or how the institution will be revisited or reviewed.

Lynne Cook suggested that the COA should not provide a checklist, but that flexibility is needed.

Beverly Young agreed that COA needed flexibility, but reiterated the need for very clear criteria for the team members to make recommendations.

It was agreed that, as a result of this conversation, staff would draft a rationale and models for the work group to consider and discuss at its next meeting.

Program Evaluation and Evidence

Larry Birch discussed the nature of the evidence that is provided by institutions during an accreditation visit. The group reviewed the list of examples contained in the *Accreditation Handbook*.

Ed Kujawa suggested that staff seek a copy of the video prepared by CSU Stanislaus and Irma Guzman Wagner on this topic.

Beverly Young suggested that the group consider what kinds of evidence are necessary today and what is on the list that no longer needs to be on the list. She discussed the push toward greater quantitative data.

Dana Griggs suggested that the group consider the types of questions that need answering and then once that is determined to figure out what kinds of data help answer those questions. She commented that the key is to determine how program sponsors are meeting the CTC standards.

Barbara Merino commented that the list contained in the *Handbook* reflects a previous point in time. She noted that SB 2042 focuses more heavily on student work and individual assessment. She said that the evidence that needs to be collected ought to consider the question related to performance. She said that candidate performance is the biggest piece missing with the current CTC process and that this is the direction in which the group needs to be thinking.

Diane Mayer noted that stakeholder feedback was important on this topic. She said that the group needs to consider candidate assessment and where it fits with accreditation. She noted that a good program does not automatically mean good teachers. She suggested that the kinds of evidence needed ought to try and move in this direction.

Beverly Young commented that the current SB 2042 environment calls for greater candidate assessment and that it is important data to consider. She cautioned, however, that the group needs to make sure it is not blurring the line between certification and accreditation. Aggregated data would be acceptable for instance for accreditation, but individual assessment of teacher candidates may not be.

Joyce Abrams commented that many institutions seem to have the perspective that more is better and hence the idea of providing and reviewing evidence can be overwhelming. However, not all of the evidence provided is really necessary. She suggested that the group identify what are critical and helpful types of evidence. She reminded the group of the enormous cost to put together the evidence rooms.

Diane Mayer agreed with Joyce Abrams and commented that more is certainly not better and that there is a need to streamline the accreditation process in this respect. She suggested consideration of a broader Framework that considers how teacher education makes a difference. She suggested this broader framework, the link to standards, and the mechanism and types of data that would be necessary to answer this question.

Terrance Cannings commented that document rooms are often an expensive and time consuming nuisance. He said that the important question is to ask the institution what it did with the data it collected and that the institution needs to show how it uses the information it has on its programs and its students.

Barbara Merino suggested a value-added approach that would look at baseline data, provide information about what it is that the program or institution did, and the results of that interaction over time. She discussed the importance in the conceptual change regarding pedagogical knowledge and content knowledge. She suggested the possibility of a hierarchy of data for different levels and uses and consideration of the critical intersection between content (subject matter knowledge) and pedagogy.

Cheryl Hickey suggested that the group consider how periodic data collection in some form could help structure the site visit – that the teams could identify areas of concern after reviewing the data, and the site visit could be largely focused on these areas with a less intensive examination of the areas in which the review teams were relatively comfortable.

Barbara Merino noted that institutions need to articulate what it is they are doing and pay greater attention to the data that it collects.

Lynne Cook discussed NCATE Standard 1 that addresses the competency of students including the NCATE requirement that 80% of program completers must pass examinations required for state licensure. She reviewed the rubric that described the conditions under which this standard could be deemed met.

Lynne Cook then discussed NCATE Standard 2 which examines how institutions use the data in their assessment system. She noted that where most institutions fail is in aggregating the data and most failures can be attributed to an institution not pulling the data altogether from various sources to look at the institutions offerings as a whole. She discussed the importance of the conceptual framework in the NCATE review and said that the team assesses what the institution said it was going to do.

Iris Riggs added that the data is primarily for candidate performance and is data on everyone in the program. She noted the importance of the question that the unit needs to use all the information at hand.

Lynne Cook described the process used by the Council for Exceptional Children. She noted that the key was the effect on student learning and that it is up to the institution to decide what measures to use. She said that she hoped that over a couple of years trend data might emerge

which would help focus a review. She further discussed the NCATE annual review process with is a paper review and discussed its pilot effort.

Iris Riggs noted that if the workgroup were to recommend a system that required data that it should consider a unit level system as it would be very challenging to get it to the program level.

Several members of the work group noted that an interim of some report may make it easier for the accreditation team and the COA to see patterns and trends at an institution.

Lynne Cook noted that the key with the CEC annual report is to look for validity and non-bias. The guidelines are written to allow flexibility.

Iris Riggs discussed the example provided of Emporia State which suggests that there is not one answer to the question.

Barbara Merino noted that some data on candidates that are available are meaningless. She suggested greater education on the types of tests that exist and the meaning of a criterion reference testing to identify its appropriate function.

Cheryl Hickey noted several examples of states that used pass rate data on program completers in some fashion in accreditation – either as preconditions or within a standard. She also discussed examples of several states that have added either annual or periodic reports to their accreditation system and that these reports feed into an accreditation review.

Reports from Lunch Group Discussions

The group divided into two groups for lunch and during that time discussed the sheet prepared that listed possible indicators of teacher preparation programs. The first group noted that it discussed the following:

- several indicated that they favored the approach where the institution can identify the data that it should collect and provide
- there is a need to reduce the evidence that is collected that is not informative or cost effective
- although the direction is towards an outcomes based model, some input data is also important
- Teacher Performance Assessment – there appears to be some interest and possibilities related to use of the TPA but since its future is not clear, it is hard to know where to go with this topic.
- RICA – there appears to be some agreement that RICA may be a good indicator to use as it has a direct connection between teacher preparation and what is required beyond teacher preparation.
- data on new teachers – seems possible and a useful tool. Such things as the success of candidates in their first two years including BTSA data might be useful.
- Review of data instruments used in other states might be helpful.
- Recognition that it is still important for the institution to demonstrate its own mission, university devised.
- Better definition of quality, what is quality and how do we measure it.

The second group reporting on the lunch conversation added the following points:

- Some of the indicators listed on the sheet provided for discussion are interesting contextual information but are not indicators of quality.
- Indicators of quality should be tied to the standards
- Many of the indicators are now part of an institution's admissions criteria and therefore aren't helpful to indicate quality
- It may be helpful for the Commission to list the types of evidence suggested or required standard by standard.
- RICA may be an appropriate exam to use in some fashion as an indicator of quality.

Sue Westbrook noted that she was not in favor of using standardized student test scores or AYP in the accreditation process as it does not necessarily indicate the quality of the teachers.

Dana Griggs suggested the group examine further what NCATE is doing in this area.

Lynne Cook indicated that CSU Northridge has been working on a project with the Carnegie Corporation to examine evidence of student learning, particularly in the teacher's first and second year. The results may be helpful at some point.

Beverly Young summarized that certainly this topic is not ready for consensus and that the group may need to continue to look at gathering stakeholder feedback to answer the question about what types of evidence and what the role of quantitative data should be. She noted that we will need to continue to add this to the workgroup's agendas for future meetings.

Barbara Merino suggested that the research and literature around this topic needs to be reviewed. She reiterated that she believed that the institution should be given the freedom to define what evidence it provides to back up its claims of effectiveness.

Larry Birch commented that there are really two different issues that need further discussion: 1) What kind of evidence does the institution need to collect and how it uses it, and 2) what kind of evidence does the Commission need from the institutions to make accreditation decisions.

Iris Riggs noted that, although no one reviews the NCATE reports at the time they are submitted, they are used at accreditation time. The advantage is that it requires the institution to keep current.

Lynne Cook noted that one important difference between NCATE and CTC is that in the NCATE process that the review can assess whether the institution is making satisfactory progress. She noted that NCATE believes there needs to be some interim review between site visits.

Barbara Merino agreed noting that it forces one to look back. She noted that the standards do not really address this but it is an area that needs addressing.

Ed Kujawa suggested that the group needs to address whether an interim review of some sort would be required of all institutions or just those with identified problems.

Iris Riggs commented that she would support something for every institution and that it be used in the next accreditation visit as a source of data for the accreditation team. She stressed that even those with full accreditation ought to have to provide an interim report.

Beverly Young noted that she did not believe the BTSA model should be used for teacher preparation but that it could be an option. She stressed that the group has agreed that one area of the *Framework* not being realized was on-going program improvement. She noted that this activity might be unrelated to mandatory follow-up for those institutions needing to correct stipulations and deficiencies.

Ed Kujawa agreed and said that he believed that there are really two distinct processes: follow up for those that need it and interim activity/report for all institutions.

Beverly Young added that there needs to be further discussion of whether the interim activity is at the unit level or program level and that she thought maybe it ought to be up to the institution.

Iris Riggs noted it would be very difficult to do an interim activity on program standards but should be focused on the Common Standards level.

Sue Westbrook agreed saying that unit improvement is the goal.

Beverly Young suggested consideration of altering the site visit to 7 years along with the NCATE cycle and then maybe do the interim on the 3rd and 5th year or something similar.

Ellen Curtis Pierce noted that she agreed with statements that the BTSA model would be too much for an institution, especially if they have numerous program offerings.

Ed Kujawa noted that there are many mandates currently and that the group needs to recognize these other reporting responsibilities and be careful not to create a system that is overbearing. He suggested that the group review what other professions require as an interim activity or report.

Beverly Young noted that there needs to be a balance between workload concerns and attention to program improvement. Accreditation ought to foster program improvement. She noted that the move to a 7 year cycle might offset the some of the workload issues.

Claire Palmerino noted that she agreed with others who have suggested that the interim activity be tied to the next accreditation visit and build on the last visit.

Lynne Cook, Iris Riggs, and Ellen Curtis Pierce all noted that they were generally supportive of the focus on unit standards, the tie-in with previous and future visits, and opposed to a feeling of compliance, but rather a focus on program improvement.

Linda Childress reiterated the benefits of the BTSA model for informal program review. She noted that she looks forward to doing this on a regular basis because she knows that it improves her program

Ed Kujawa noted that these activities can be very positive, must relate to the standards, should address new initiatives, and suggested that options be brought back.

Joyce Abrams commented that she liked Iris Rigg's comment that it can be likened to a log and does not have to be a huge ordeal. She suggested that whatever is done that it be kept short, address what is important in the past, present and future. She noted that this can be tremendously helpful as personnel change at institutions regularly, and that it can only contribute to program improvement.

Ed Kujawa and Beverly Young summarized the discussion saying that there appears to be consensus that there ought to be some interim activity of some sort. They asked staff to bring back models for the group to consider. In addition, they suggested that the group consider how follow up is done.

Purpose of Accreditation

The group agreed to take the draft revised pieces of the purpose of accreditation back and to read it thoroughly. It would be discussed at the next meeting.

Review of Topics/Options Matrix

The group reviewed the Topics/Options matrix and came to preliminary consensus on several of the issues. The group noted several areas that it still needed to address in future meetings. It was agreed that BIR Training should be added to the matrix. Barbara Merino commented on the need to look at diversity and English learner issues. Beverly Young responded that the group would need to determine how such issues fit under the topic of accreditation.

The matrix will be revised to reflect this discussion for the November meeting of the work group.

Next meeting

The group agreed to meet from 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 on November 17, and 8:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on November 18th. The meeting was adjourned.